

JOINT TASK FORCE CALIFORNIA

California Army and Air National Guard

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Search and rescue missions are a continuing success

NEW ORLEANS, LA. – Successful missions start with strategic planning. Strategic planning leads to saving lives. Saving lives has been the mission handed down to a group of dedicated people.

A team of soldiers in the California Army National Guard from the 2/185th Armored Battalion out of San Diego have had several successful search and rescue missions lately.

Led by their Alpha Co. commanding officer, Capt. Gerold Davis, soldiers of the 2/185th have saved more than 30 local residents from their damaged homes.

“It feels good to be out here making a difference in the lives of these people,” said Davis.

The soldiers have been using power boats and flat-bottom tin boats in the slowly receding flood waters to patrol neighborhoods which still have residents trapped inside their homes.

“These residents know that time has run out, and to stay in their homes would just be jeopardizing their health and ultimately their lives,” said Davis.

Food and water were given to every resident needing help in the water-logged streets. Some people, who wanted to stay, were gently persuaded to board the search and rescue boats and were taken to a facility that would give them the proper medical treatment they deserved.

“It breaks your heart to see these people in such dire need who are torn between staying right where they are to protect their property and then making the right decision to leave their homes,” said Spc. Ryan Schwartz, one of the boat operators from Atwater, California.

Soldiers from the 2/185th search and rescue team will continue to patrol the neighborhoods during the daylight hours until every resident has been brought to safety.



California Army National Guard soldiers from the 2/185th Armor Battalion out of San Diego discuss operations and procedures for a search and rescue mission aboard a speed boat.
(Photo by the 69th Press Camp Headquarters)



Staff Sgt. Francisco Becerra, a member of the California Army National Guard from the 2/185th Armor Battalion out of San Diego, offers water and transportation to a local resident who had lost his home and belongings due to the hurricane.
(Photo by the 69th Press Camp Headquarters)



California Army National Guard Soldiers from the 2/185th Armor Batallion, out of San Diego, speak with a local resident they rescued from a home that had been damaged by the hurricane. (Photo by the 69th Press Camp Headquarters)



California Army National Guard soldiers from the 2/185th Armor Battalion out of San Diego patrol the streets and provide transport during a search and rescue mission. (Photo by 69th Press Camp Headquarters, Fairfield.)